

Exhibit No. 1

Corporate Office Date 3-10-11
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Member of Montana Senate Finance Committee

Testimony for SB 359

My name is Ray Kuntz and I am Chairman and CEO of Watkins and Shepard Trucking. I am a past Chairman of the American Trucking Associations and a past Chairman of a National Task Force to face the driver shortage issue.

Before the recession we had a driver shortage that was reaching crisis stage due to an aging driving force and demographics issues plus a growing need for more trucks on the road. During the recession due to trucking industry downsizing and bankruptcies the shortage lessened and now with the economy recovering there is a driver shortage again.

In addition to that the Department of Transportation has implemented CSA 2010 that grades trucking company's safety more aggressively and puts more weight on the actual driver's safety record. Due to this it is estimated that 7% of the Nation's 3.4 million drivers have poor driving records and as many as half of that 7% or 119,000 drivers that are expected to be lost to the system this year.

Truck driving is an occupation that can take applicants at any age and turn them in to drivers in about 6 weeks at a reasonable pay. Our average driver pay with benefits last year was almost \$50,000 during a recovering economy. It is also an occupation where out of state companies can hire Montana based drivers that can continue to live and raise their families in Montana.

I believe Montana could easily absorb over 500 drivers per year a combination of returning veterans and unemployed or underemployed Montanan's.

Many of Montana Veterans were truck drivers while deployed and would like to drive when they return to the States and make great drivers, unfortunately the GI bill does not adequately fund that training.

If we are to develop our oil capacity in Eastern Montana we will need many more drivers. The average well in Western North Dakota requires 800 truckloads of product from start to finish. Currently there are not near enough drivers in Eastern Montana to face this kind of demand.

Developing natural resources, means having the vision to develop our workforce to in preparation. Without the drivers you cannot drill the wells. Those are high paying jobs that give you a quick return on the state's investment.

This small investment will be returned to the state very quickly as these drivers will be paying state income tax after a few months of training. Having the driving staff available to develop our oil resources will mean big returns to Montana.

Ray Kuntz
 CEO
 Watkins and Shepard Trucking